

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This section describes the overall view and description of the conduct of this research. Among the things discussed include the background of the research, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, research contribution, research scope, research operational definition and research theory framework.

1.2 Research Background

The elements of knowledge, understanding and language play a pivotal role in the scope of knowledge discipline, especially that of Islamic knowledge (Awang Sariyan, 2009). Language serves as a medium of knowledge to attain the desired understanding. It is a Rabbani education derived from Allah that had enlightened Prophet Adam AS with the knowledge which thereupon transposes from one generation to another (al-Attas, 1992). Hence, in the concept of religious knowledge, if the knowledge of language coexists with the accurate understanding, the perfection of practice (*amal*) is rendered (al-Ghazāli, 1980). Practicing the right practices would evoke positive effects on the attitude and lifestyle of a Muslim.

For the deaf community, their medium of knowledge is different from the typical community (Mohd Huzairi, 2017). Most of them do not communicate like the typical community. Additionally, they do not translate the words per se in their daily conversation. They are well of using sign language as their medium in communication for seeking knowledge as to how the typical community uses spoken language as a medium of communication (Naimie et al. 2020).

Sign language is a system of communication using visual language. It is a form of communication used by the deaf community. Regardless, sign language is also practiced by the community who experience difficulty in speaking and incapable of learning by speech (Wilbur, 2013). This is because, sign language facilitates the communication of the deaf community while providing the avenue to express their feelings, views, idea and other things. Sign language is unique when it is viewed through the shaped hand or hand symbol that conveys the meaning for a particular situation (Loughran, 2013). In addition to that, body language and facial expression draw the attention and intonation in the usage of sign language (Wilbur, 2013).

In the Malaysian context, the Malaysian Sign Language (MSL) becomes the sign language conversed daily for most of the places in this country. MSL contains various accents that distinct from a state to another. It is the pure language for deaf persons in Malaysia. It is also the mother tongue and specialised sign language for the deaf persons in Malaysia (Sazali, 2004). Furthermore, the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 states MSL as the official language for the deaf community in Malaysia. Technically, MSL is a language that is not convened by any grammar system or structure of other languages in the world - not even the structure of English or Bahasa Melayu. It stands on its own grammar which heavily relies on the visual perception of the deaf themselves (Ho, 2009). It is undeniable that MSL is unfitting to be practiced in the settings of language teaching and learning, be it English or Bahasa Melayu. Despite that, the practice of MSL is instrumental in facilitating the deaf persons to understand things (Majudiri Y Foundation for the Deaf, 2006).

Several non-government organisations (NGO) in Malaysia such as the Malaysia Federation of Deaf (MDF), the Lions Club, along with several research

institutions and volunteering communities have been widely published books on MSL for the deaf community's reference (Siew Ong, Salimah, & Roziati, 2007). Sign language involves hand movement and facial expression; which their illustrations in the book cannot really demonstrate the sequence of hand gestures. In the thought of that, several community projects have initiated the use of electronic media to aid the teaching and learning of MSL. The tools used in the electronic teaching and learning include the MSL learning package in the form of video CD (VCD), compact disc (CD), as well as the online-accessible version from the internet (Siew Ong et al., 2007).

On top of that, in seeking to understand something, it must first specify its meaning. Without a clear explanation of things, it would be hard to understand and evoke misunderstanding. A similar situation occurs in the process of learning a new language, where it is equally important for students to understand and master the vocabulary before they could speak the language properly. Hence, a dictionary is required in the learning process. In the same manner, a study by Siew Ong et al. (2007) on sign language learning stresses that a dictionary is essential to understand the meaning of a word (sign) and knowing the pronunciation if the student is not deaf (up to 20 dB) or having mild hearing loss (20-45 dB).

This situation comprises how the deaf community learn about Islam. The sign language dictionary plays a pivotal role for them to know and understand Islamic terminologies. Without a solid understanding of the religion, the belief and practice of *‘ibādah* will be contorted (Muhammad Isa Selamat, 1998). A ḥadīth narrated by Abu Musa (may peace be upon him) that Rasulullah PBUH said:

مَثَلُ مَا بَعَثَنِي اللَّهُ بِهِ مِنْ الْهُدَى وَالْعِلْمِ كَمَثَلِ الْغَيْثِ الْكَثِيرِ أَصَابَ أَرْضًا فَكَانَ مِنْهَا نَقِيَّةٌ قَبِلَتْ الْمَاءَ فَأَنْبَتَتِ الْكَلَّاءَ وَالْعُشْبَ الْكَثِيرَ وَكَانَتْ مِنْهَا أَجَادِبٌ أُمْسَكَتِ الْمَاءَ فَنَفَعَ اللَّهُ بِهَا النَّاسَ فَشَرِبُوا وَسَقَوْا وَزَرَعُوا وَأَصَابَتْ مِنْهَا طَائِفَةٌ أُخْرَى إِمَّا هِيَ قِيَعَانٌ لَا تُمْسِكُ مَاءً وَلَا تُنْبِتُ كَلًّا فَذَلِكَ مَثَلُ مَنْ فَقَهُ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ وَنَفَعَهُ مَا بَعَثَنِي اللَّهُ بِهِ فَعَلِمَ وَعَلَّمَ وَمَثَلُ مَنْ لَمْ يَرْفَعْ بِذَلِكَ رَأْسًا وَلَمْ يَقْبَلْ هُدَى اللَّهِ الَّذِي أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ.

Meaning: “The similitude of that guidance and knowledge with which Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, has sent me is that of rain falling upon the earth. There is a good piece of land which receives the rainfall (eagerly) and as a result of it there is grown in it herbage and grass abundantly. Then there is a land hard and barren which retains water and the people derive benefit from it and they drink it and make the animals drink. Then there is another land which is barren. Neither water is retained in it, nor is the grass grown in it. And that is the similitude of the first one who develops the understanding of the religion of Allah and it becomes a source of benefit to him with which Allah sent me. (The second one is that) who acquires the knowledge of religion and imparts it to others. (Then the other type is) one who does not pay attention to (the revealed knowledge) and thus does not accept guidance of Allah with which I have been sent. That is a comparison with those who obey me and follow my message, and those who disobey me and disbelieve the truth I have brought.” (Ḥadīth. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Kitāb al-‘Ilmi: Bāb Faḍli Man ‘Alīma wa ‘Alama: Juz’1:#79) and (Ḥadīth. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. Kitāb al-Faḍā’il: Bāb Bayāni Mathali mā Bu‘itha bihin Nabī Ṣallallahu ‘Alaihi wa Sallam minal Hudā wal ‘Ilmi: Juz’14:#2282).

The books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2 also contained terminologies on Islam, *Imān* (faith on Allah), and *Ihsān* (spiritual excellence). These terminologies were determined based on the priority of a Muslim. However, despite being the main reference, both books do not explain those terminologies. Contrastingly, a study by Siew Ong et al. (2007) asserts in learning sign language, the understanding of the meaning of a sign language’s terminology is imperative besides its spelling and pronunciation.

The translation of meaning to sign language’s terminologies is crucial to facilitate the deaf community’s understanding on those terms. Without a right translation, this community could not apprehend and practice it properly, especially in

the contexts of *aqīdah* and *‘ibādah*. A ḥadīth narrated by Abu Hurairah RA, Prophet Muhammad PBUH said:

مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا، يُفَقِّهْهُ فِي الدِّينِ

Meaning: “When Allah wills good for a person, He causes him to understand the religion.” (Ḥadīth. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Kitāb al-‘Ilmi: Bāb Man Yuridillah bihi Khayrān Yufaqqihu fid Dīn: Juz’ 1: #71) and (Ḥadīth. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. Kitāb Zakāt: Bāb Nahī ‘anil Masā‘il: Juz’ 2: #1037)

In the thought of that, this study is conducted to translate the Islamic terminologies in the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2 based on the Book of Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur’ān by Ar-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī in the structure of Malaysian Sign Language. This study employs qualitative approach, which is subjective research and emphasises the explanation of a certain phenomenon. In this study, the researcher identifies Islamic terminologies in the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2, before translating their meanings based on the Book of Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur’ān by Ar-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī and triangulated with other books such as Dictionary of al-Qur’ān (*Kamus al-Qur’ān*) by Dato' Dr. Zulkifli Haji Mohd Yusoff, Al-Sirāj fī Bayān Gharib al-Qur’ān by Dr. Muhammad bin ‘Abdul ‘Aziz al-Khuḍayrī, and Encyclopaedia of the Meanings of Al-Qur’ān - Syarah Alfaazhul by Al-Ustadz M Dhuha Abdul Jabbar and Al-Ustadz KH. N. Burhanudin. Finally, translating the findings to the structure of Malaysian Sign Language accordingly.

With accurate translation, the deaf community would be able to properly apprehend and practice especially in the context of Islam. The accurate understanding renders the perfection of practice (*‘amal*). Practising the true practice drive Muslims toward a positive attitude and lifestyle.

1.3 Problem Statement

Everybody must understand religious knowledge and put them into practise. However, Imam al-Ghazāli (1993) remarks that the purity of religious knowledge is slowly decaying due to the misconception by humans which learn them for worldly interest. The said situation will only produce an intellectual community but with a poor principle of *imān* as they fail to truly absorb the essence of the religion. Hence, Imam al-Ghazāli (1993) and Heizal Henry (2012) affirm that understanding religious knowledge is imperative before practising them. A true and clear understanding will reassure a positive impact on the attitude and lifestyle of a Muslim.

Those experiencing troubles in hearing, especially the deaf community, should re-define their understanding of religious knowledge. This owes to the fact that communication is the main challenge for this community to obtain their right in understanding the religious knowledge (Bahariah et al., 2021; Naimie et al., 2020; Izuli et al., 2020; Siti Ramna et al., 2018; Syar Meeze et al., 2017). The deaf community is prone to use sign language to extensively understand a particular knowledge due to experiencing hearing problems (Zainy & Hizam, 2021; Siti Ramna et al., 2020; Azman et al., 2020; Nurul Asiah & Siti Ramna, 2019; Muhibbah, 2017). However, due to the language factor, communication for the deaf community becomes limited (Peter et al., 2021; Shirin et al., 2020; Nik Hassan et al., 2016). To make it worse, the deaf community is also limited in sign language vocabulary acquisition (Izuli et al., 2020; Lund & Douglas, 2016; Syar Meeze, 2015; Ririn Linawati, 2012). They are difficult to understand languages with higher complexity and other languages, such as Arabic (Naimie et al., 2020; Muhammad Sayuti et al., 2020; Lund & Douglas, 2016, Syar Meeze et al., 2014; Ririn Linawati, 2012). It gets even worse when this community tends to create their understanding based on the visual

perception without knowing its reality or cause (Majudiri Y Foundation for the Deaf, 2006). This is aligned with the view from O'Brien and Kusters (2017) that the deaf community wield their visual strength to create meaning out of something. This makes them difficult to apprehend abstract matters (Lianto, 2021; Izuli et al., 2020; Syar Meeze et al., 2017; Nik Hassan et al., 2016; Syar Meeze et al., 2014; Norziha, 2009) such as the heaven and the hell. In addition, they tend to quickly make an association out of something they see. For instance, they assume Allah and Prophet Muhammad PBUH as the King and Queen for they have seen everywhere that the calligraphy posters of Allah and the Prophet hung on the wall side-by-side, as to how the posters of the King and Queen are (Mohd Joremi; 2016). Apart from that, their own attitude of lacking research also hinders them from reaching the perfect understanding of religion (Adnan, 2017; Nik Hassan et al., 2016; Hamdi Ishak, 2010; Abdul Munir, 2009). Additionally, their apathetic attitude, with the excuse of already getting old, also blocks them from expanding their understanding of religious knowledge.

Other than that, visual learning aids available for the deaf community to learn religious knowledge is practically almost non-existent (Adnan, 2017; Mohd Huzairi, 2017; Mustafa et al., 2015). The main reference of sign language books to learn about religious terminologies also do not describe meanings of terminology per se (Abdul Rahim et al., 2019; Buku Bahasa Isyarat Malaysia, 2011; Buku Bahasa Isyarat Malaysia Jilid 2, 2014). Rather, these books only serve as a brief dictionary containing the terminologies, their hand gestures and examples in sentences without explaining the meaning of those terminologies (Buku Bahasa Isyarat Malaysia; 2011, Buku Bahasa Isyarat Malaysia Jilid 2; 2014). The followings are some examples from the book of Malaysian Sign Language (2011);

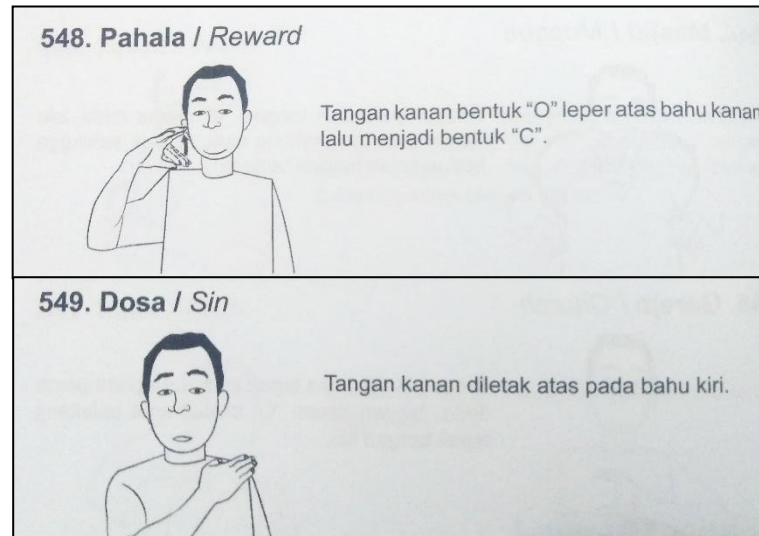


Figure 1.1: Diagrams of hand gestures for reward and sin without explanation

Furthermore, there are no religious reference materials, similarly like an encyclopaedia, suitable for the deaf (Abdul Rahim et al., 2019; Norakyairee & Nurutthoilah, 2017). The dictionaries for religious terminologies at present generally cater the general public and not specifically addressing the need of a particular community.

To indirectly re-evaluate this issue, it will negatively affect the understanding of deaf persons, especially in terms of religious knowledge (Syar Meeze et al., 2017; Hamdi Ishak, 2016; Hamdi Ishak et al., 2010; Mohd Huzairi et al., 2010). This is because, religious knowledge necessitates a coherently accurate understanding as it is transpired through al- Qur'an and Sunnah, and it is unequal with other terms, which do not directly affect the *aqidah* and *'ibadah* of a Muslim (Nurain et al., 2017).

Therefore, a plan of action must be expedited to address this gap. The understanding of religious terminologies must be parallel to the *shari'ah* and conforming the context of understanding for the deaf persons to ensure their opportunity to seek knowledge is not neglected (Siti Ramna et al., 2018; Hayatunnufus et al., 2018; Norakyairee & Nurutthoilah, 2017; Muhammad Sayuti et

al., 2016). This is to avoid the misunderstandings among the deaf community, which will finally drive them to renounce Islam (Hayatunnufus et al., 2018; Syar Meeze et al., 2017; Hamdi Ishak; 2016).

In regards to that, this study seeks to provide the translation of religious terminologies found in the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2 guided by the Book of Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur'ān by Ar-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī within the structure of Malaysian Sign Language. The Book of Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur'ān was selected for the author, Ar-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī, adopted an interesting *manhaj* (method) and presented in-depth discussion (Zarkasyī, n.d). Firstly, he organised the meaning of the terminologies based on their intrinsic meanings, followed by the meanings of the terminologies' derivative words, then discussing their implicit meanings and associating between those two (Al-Aṣfahānī, 1412). He also gave examples of the terminologies through al-Qur'ān verses, ḥadīth and Arabic poetries while provided explanations along the way. In the context of al-Qur'ān, he defined the intended meanings as what was recited. He also interpreted them through al-Qur'ān, ḥadīth, words of the companions as well as *tābi'īn*. Furthermore, he also provided discussion through views from *ulamā'* guided by *sharī'ah* (Al-Aṣfahānī, 1412). The findings of this study is also triangulated with other books such as Dictionary of al-Qur'ān (*Kamus al-Qur'ān*) by Dato' Dr. Zulkifli Haji Mohd Yusoff, Al-Sirāj fī Bayān Gharib al-Qur'ān by Dr. Muhammad bin 'Abdul 'Aziz al-Khuḍayrī, and Encyclopaedia of the Meanings of Al-Qur'ān - Syārah Alfāzhul Qur'ān by Al-Ustadz M Dhuha Abdul Jabbar and Al-Ustadz KH. N. Burhanudinas the secondary data. All in all, the researcher adopted the document analysis method to extract Islamic terminologies found in the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2,

guided by the Book of Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur’ān and other secondary sources, and finally translated the findings according to the structure of Malaysian Sign Language.

1.4 Research Objectives

Specifically, this research aims to achieve research objectives as follows:

1. To identify Islamic terminologies contained in the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2;
2. To translate the meaning of Islamic terminologies according to the book of Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur’ān;
3. To translate the meaning of Islamic terminologies within the Malaysian Sign Language structure.

1.5 Research Question

Referring to the research background, these research questions would solve and answer some problems, namely:

1. What are the Islamic terminologies contained in the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2?
2. What are the translation of the meaning of Islamic terminologies according to the book of Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur’ān?
3. What are the translation of the meaning of Islamic terminologies within the Malaysian Sign Language structure?

1.6 Definition of Terms

The title of this dissertation is *“The Use of Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur’ān in The Translation of Islamic Terminologies in Malaysian Sign Language Structure”*.

Therefore, the researcher will elaborate on several important terms as below.

1.6.1 Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur’ān

The book of Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur’ān was written by Abu Qasim Husin bin Muhammad who is also known as ar-Rāghib al-Aṣfahānī in the year of 1412H. In writing this book, al-Aṣfahānī had made reference to several books and discussed each of them. He quoted some of the references while dismissing some of the views. Among the main sources were the book of Mujmal fil Lughah (Ibnu Faris,1986); the book of Syāmīl fil Lughah (Abi Mansur al-Jaban, t.t), Tahzibul al-Lafz (Ibnu Sukit, t.t), Masā’il Halibiyyat (Abi Ali al-Farisi, t.t), Ma’āni al-Qur’ān (al-Farra’, t.t), Jamharatul Lughah (Ibnu Duraid,1987) and a number of *Ahl al-Kalām* figures like al-Jabai’, Abu Qāsim al-Balkhi, and Abu Bakar al-‘Alaf. He had also quoted several views from scholars without citing their names. All of these are the reason why this book is the prominent source among others in terms of language and *tafsīr* (al-Aṣfahānī, 1412H).

In regards to this research, the researcher analysed this book to extract the translation of the meaning of Islamic terminologies acquired from the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2 to be customised according to the structure of Malaysian Sign Language.

1.6.2 Translation

Catford (1965) defines translation as the process of replacing textual material from a language (source language) with equivalent textual content in another language (target language) while Nida (1964) considers translation involves recreating the closest equivalent of the source language message into the target language, first in terms of meaning and second in terms of style. As for Newmark (1981), translation is perceived as a work of art embodying the effort of replacing a written message and/or statement in a language into a similar message and/or statement of another language.

From the concepts of translation proposed by Catford (1965), Nida (1964) and Newmark (1981), it can be concluded that translation is an effort to seek the most accurate and suitable match of the original meaning within the original source so that the meaning could be conveyed to the target readers.

In this study, the researcher translates the Islamic terminologies acquired from the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2 to be fitted accordingly to the Malaysian Sign Language.

1.6.3 Islamic terminologies

Islam in the context of language carries the meaning “to submit”. While in terms of terminology, Islam means obedience, submission and surrender with a full conscience (Ibnu Manzur, 1968). Abdul Karim Zaidan (2002) asserts that Islam means *istislām* (self-submission), *khudu^c* (bow and obey), *al-Inqiyad lillah* (adhere to Allah) and all of these qualities occur with full of conscience and willingness, not by any force.

In this study, the researcher analysed the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2 to extract the Islamic terminologies. The Islamic terminologies were identified by directly associating them with the daily life of a Muslim. Subsequently, 28 Islamic terminologies were found normally used in the routine and communication regarding Islam of the deaf community. The following table displays the identified terminologies:

Table 1.1: Terminologies associated to Islam in the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2

No.	Terminologies	No.	Terminologies	No.	Terminologies	No.	Terminologies
1	<i>Agama</i> (Religion)	8	<i>Haid</i> (Menstruation)	15	<i>Iman</i> (Faith)	22	<i>Nabi Muhammad SAW</i> (Prophet Muhammad PBUH)
2	Islam	9	<i>Doa</i> (Pray)	16	Allah	23	Qur'ān
3	<i>Hukum</i> (Law)	10	<i>Solat</i> (Prayer)	17	<i>Tuhan</i> (God)	24	<i>Pahala</i> (Reward)

4	<i>Wajib</i> (Obligated)	11	<i>Imam</i> (Leader)	18	<i>Rahmat</i> (Grace)	25	<i>Dosa</i> (Sin)
5	<i>‘Ibādah</i> (Religious practice)	12	<i>Masjid</i>	19	<i>Malaikat</i> (Angel)	26	<i>Syurga</i> (Heaven)
6	<i>Niat</i> (Intention)	13	<i>Puasa</i> (Fast)	20	<i>Rasul</i> (Prophet/ Messenger)	27	<i>Neraka</i> (Hell)
7	<i>Suci</i> (Pure)	14	<i>Zakāt</i> (Alms)	21	<i>Nabi</i> (Prophet)	28	<i>Syukur</i> (Grateful)

1.6.4 Malaysian Sign Language (MSL)

The Malaysian Sign Language (MSL) is the sign language that is dominantly used daily all over Malaysia. MSL is the mother tongue and the special sign language for deaf persons in Malaysia (Bell et al., 2015). The Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 has indicated that MSL is the official language for the deaf community in Malaysia. MSL is a language structured with its own grammar that is prone to the visual perception of deaf individuals (Ho, 2009). This sign language is practical to facilitate the understanding of deaf persons (Majudiri Y Foundation for the Deaf, 2006). In this study, the researcher will translate the findings into the structure of Malaysian Sign Language by adapting some sign language’s translation theory.

1.7 Research Limitation

The scope or limitations of this research focuses on several key issues which back up this research namely:

a) Research Aspects

In this study, the researcher deliberately adopted the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2 to identify terminologies associated with Islam, as these books are the early prints from the Malaysia Federation of Deaf as a reference for the deaf learn the basic words and signs. In the meantime, the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2 do not carry the meaning for the listed terminologies. Hence, the researcher adopted both volumes as the main reference to extract the Islamic terminologies.

To translate the Islamic terminologies acquired from the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2, the book of *Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qurʿān* was chosen as the main reference due to its interesting method and in-depth discussion (Zarkasyī, n.d). Primarily, the author organised the meanings for the terminologies according to their natural definitions, followed by the meanings of their derivative words, and then discussed the implicit meanings while associating between both ends of spectrums. The author of the book had also provided examples of those terminologies in the forms of al-Qurʿān verses, ḥadīth and Arabic poetries and discussed them further. In the context of al-Qurʿān, he defined their intended meanings along with the recitation. He had also interpreted them through al-Qurʿān, ḥadīth, words of the companions as well as *tabiʿin*. In addition, the author had also presented his discussion through views from *ulamāʿ* that are aligned with the *sharīʿah*.

According to Zarkasyī (1957) in his book entitled *Al-Burhān fi ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān*, in chapter 18, many have written on *gharib* (hidden/vague) words in al-Qur’ān but the best discussion can be found from the book of Mufradāt Alfāz al-Qur’ān. Al-Fairūz Abadi (2000) in the book of al-Bulghah affirms that the definitions provided in this book are beyond compare. A great number of authors admire this work by al-Aṣfahānī that is considered as a mini scientific encyclopaedia that comprises the aspects of language, grammar, *tafsīr* (interpretation), *qirā’āt* (recitation), *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *manṭiq* (logic), wisdom, literature, *usul al-fiqh* (principles of Islamic jurisprudence) and *tawhid* (asserting oneness of God) (al-Aṣfahānī, 1412H). Apart from that, the researcher had also adopted Dictionary of al-Qur’ān (*Kamus al-Qur’ān*) by Dato' Dr. Zulkifli Haji Mohd Yusoff, *Al-Sirāj fi Bayān Gharib al-Qur’ān* by Dr. Muhammad bin ‘Abdul ‘Aziz al-Khudayrī, and Encyclopaedia of the Meanings of Al-Qur’ān - *Syārah Alfāzhul Qur’ān* by Al-Ustadz M Dhuha Abdul Jabbar and Al-Ustadz KH. N. Burhanudin as the secondary data in the process of data triangulation process to support and refine the meaning of terminologies in the discussion.

1.8 Significance of Research

Reflecting through the issues and the needs of the deaf community in learning religious knowledge, this research is vitally important to be conducted as it will shed some light and guide this community on truly understand Islamic terminologies. With that, the findings of this research will serve as a guide and come in handy for the Malaysian Federation of Deaf to improve their contents in the books of Malaysian Sign Language Volume 1 and 2 for future publications by providing readers with the meanings of Islamic terminologies according to the research findings.

This will indirectly supplement the religious knowledge reference suitable for the context of the deaf persons’ understanding aligned with al-Qur’ān and the *Sunnah*.

The data from the findings that have acquired the experts' consensus has the potential to provide inputs to the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), states Islamic departments and NGOs to be adopted as a fundamental reference in training the educators among the deaf as well as practical during the teaching and learning process of this community's religious classes.

Therefore, this research is significant as it could yield the meanings for the religious terminologies aligned with al-Qur'ān and Sunnah as well as fitting to the context of understanding among the deaf community. A true and clear understanding will drive a positive impact on the attitude and lifestyle of deaf persons. This will indirectly shape up the characteristics of a Muslim that holds a firm principle of *iman* as the true understanding of religious knowledge is fully absorbed by them.

1.9 Research Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks guide the paths of the research and offer the foundation for establishing its credibility. It explains the path of research and grounds it firmly in theoretical constructs. This framework aims to make research findings more meaningful, acceptable to the theoretical constructs in the research field and ensures generalisability (Adom et al., 2018). The theoretical framework also synthesises the existing theories, related concepts, and empirical research, to develop a foundation for new theory development (Tonette & Maria, 2009).

The approach adopted for this research is intersemiotic translation as developed by Jakobson (1959). Intersemiotic is referred to as the conversion of verbal and non-verbal forms (symbols and signals) into an understandable language that can generate the interpretation and understanding of the applied symbol (Hasuria, 2009). In addition, according to Shuttleworth and Cowie (1991) in Hasuria (2009: 57), intersemiotic is "the interpretation of verbal symbol through the non-verbal symbol

system”. The researcher adopted this approach in the process of translating the findings from the second objective to the third objective.

This research is also supported by the theory of relevance by Sperber and Wilson (1986). This theory was then expanded by Gutt within the discipline of translation in 1991. This theory emphasises the relevancy of an utterance by using the approach of context and the effects of context. The theory of relevance can be defined as the more contextual effects, the more relevant an utterance is; the lesser processing effort used the more relevant an utterance is (Nor Hashimah Jalaluddin, 1992:33-34). Therefore, in associating this notion with sign language and translation, symbolism creation is directly correlated with the intended meanings and to understand these symbols require but less mental interpretation effort.

In fulfilling the research findings for the third objective, the researcher explored the discipline of the syntax that denotes the formation of sentence consists of word orders that is bound by grammatical rules. Conveying sign language is a straightforward process, which has unique sentence structure and grammar without adhering to any speech grammar in Malaysia (Haung et. al., 2014). There are three components that must be known in sign grammar, which are subject (S), object (O) and verb (V) (Dubot et, al., 2014). In this study, the researcher applied the structure of Malaysian Sign Language commonly practised by deaf persons in Malaysia as done in the research by Bell et al. (2015) and Ho Koon Wei (2009). Furthermore, as remarked by Donna & Rachel (2014), the SOV components are generally the syntax adopted by all sign language. Among the commonly practised syntax in Malaysia are:

Table 1.2: List of Syntax Commonly Practiced in Malaysia

No.	Syntax form	Abbreviation
1	VERB	V
2	VERB + OBJECT	VO
3	OBJECT + VERB	OV
4	SUBJECT + VERB	SV
5	SUBJECT + VERB + OBJECT	SVO
6	SUBJECT + OBJECT + VERB	SOV
7	OBJECT + SUBJECT + VERB	OSV

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the research background, research problem, research objective and aim, research questions, research contribution, research theory framework, research limitation, and research operational definition. This discussion gives preliminary picture of the pre-research's essential aspects, and facilitates the comprehension of the terms used in this research.